

Alaska Arizona Michigan Montana New Mexico New York

Texas Washington

May 6, 2004

The Honorable Don Young
Chairman
U.S. House Transportation & Infrastructure
Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James Oberstar
Ranking Member
U.S. House Transportation & Infrastructure
Committee
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works
Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James Jeffords
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works
Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Gentlemen:

As you and your staff work over the next few weeks drafting a compromise between the House-passed and Senate-passed transportation reauthorization bills, we urge you to consider the impact this legislation will have on the distinct situation faced by the nation's border states.


Our economic growth is threatened because our border crossings do not have the capacity to meet increased commercial traffic and the need for increased security at our borders. The resulting gridlock at our borders, if not addressed in the near future, will significantly increase costs to manufacturers and shippers making border states less competitive in the global market place.

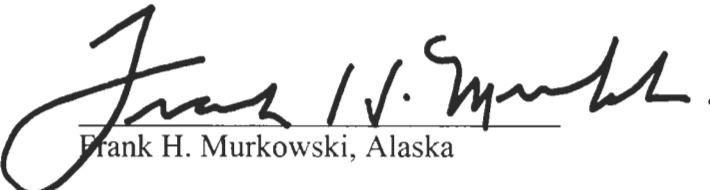
S 1072 provides guaranteed funding to border states to plan and construct new border crossings, to expand and modernize existing crossings and to improve highway connections leading to those crossings. This is a significant improvement over the Borders and Corridors Program in TEA 21, a discretionary program, under which border needs were short-changed. The SAFETEA Border Program also provides states with more flexibility in planning and implementing improvements, even allowing states to invest in projects with our Canadian and Mexican counterparts where they may have the greatest impact on congestion.

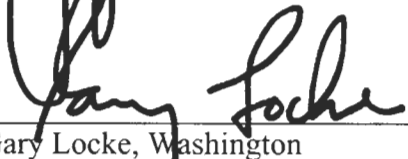
We urge you to retain this provision in the final agreement. It is critically important to our states' economies that we work together to ensure these Senate provisions are included in a final transportation reauthorization bill. It is our hope we can count on your support and look forward to working with you to ensure that our border crossings facilitate the movement of people and goods between our neighbors, not deter them.

Thank you again for your hard work and dedication to our nation's transportation infrastructure needs.


Sincerely,



Jennifer Granholm, Michigan

Frank H. Murkowski, Alaska

Gary Locke, Washington

Rick Perry, Texas

Janet Napolitano, Arizona

George E. Pataki, New York

Bill Richardson, New Mexico

Judy Martz, Montana

cc: Congressional Leadership
Hon. Thomas E. Petri
Hon. William O. Lipinski
Hon. Christopher S. "Kit" Bond
Hon. Harry Reid